





I gasp, my heart pounding. ‘*Prosecco?*’

The mighty stallion stalks towards me. He has nostrils like buckets and his muscles are gigantic and rippling. He looks absolutely nothing like the rocking horse in the attic.

He stomps around, trampling through the glowing coals of the fire and lowering his head to peer into the cave. He seems to be looking for something. Suddenly he turns and clip-clops his way back to me, only it’s more *CLIP! CLOP! CLIP!* and sparks explode where his hooves strike the ground.

‘Er . . . I might make us some toast,’ says Win,

edging away.

‘Win, don’t go. Prosecco hates me!’

‘Not as much as he hates me,’ he says, and he slips into the cave.

Prosecco stares at me and tosses his mane.

‘Really?’ I dare to look him in the eye. ‘You hate Win more than you hate me?’ Somehow, by raising his shoulders and narrowing his eyes, Prosecco manages to imply *only just*. Then he steps towards me, forcing me backwards until I’m pushed up against the rock face. He lifts up one hoof and presses it into my chest.

‘What’s the matter, Prosecco? Are you angry with me? I was never *really* going to throw you out of the attic window . . . Or are you annoyed because Rose isn’t here?’

His big head rises then falls. He’s nodding.

‘You are? Well, don’t blame me! Rose could have come, but she chose to go to Claire’s instead!’ I’m gibbering now, but I can’t help it. I get the feeling that if Prosecco wanted to he could push his hoof straight through me like a skewer in a kebab. He bares his dazzling teeth. ‘What do

you want?!' I cry.

He steps back and starts pawing the ground and tossing his mane from side to side. He rears up until he's towering over me, then crashes back down. His tail whips round and a few strands of hair catch my arm. Pain shoots through me. It's like thousands of needles jabbing into me . . . or being stung by bees.

As I clutch my arm I realise that Rose made this happen. Prosecco's tail never used to sting, but just by saying some words in the attic yesterday, Rose changed something in Roar.

Win edges out of the cave. 'Arthur, what've you done to him? Why's he so angry?'

'I've not done anything! He wants Rose.'

I look into Prosecco's wild eyes. 'She's not in Roar. She's at home, where we come from, and she might be freaking out a bit right now, but she's totally safe, trust me.' Prosecco thinks for a moment – I know he's thinking because his glittery eyeballs have become narrow slits – then he nods, showing he's accepted what I've said. After one last glower he turns to leave.

'Don't go.' I run forward. 'Our grandad is in Roar and Crowky's got him at the Crow's Nest. Can you help us get there? Give us a lift or something?'



Prosecco flashes me a disgusted look, then

rears up on his hind legs and leaps into the forest.

‘That horse has got melting into darkness *nailed*,’ says Win as Prosecco and his thundering hooves vanish into the night. ‘Don’t worry, mate. Tomorrow, when the scarecrow army are nice and quiet, we’ll find your grandad and get him back. We don’t need that great big horse to help us.’

I’m not just worried; I’m scared too. I don’t remember feeling like this when we used to play Roar. If we felt fear, it was the exciting, fun type, like when you go on a rollercoaster or listen to a ghost story. I put my hand to my chest. It aches from where Prosecco pressed his hoof into me and I can feel my heart thudding. There is nothing fun about what I’m feeling right now. ‘We can do this, can’t we, Win?’ I look at him for reassurance. ‘We can go to the Crow’s Nest, get past Crowky and save my grandad?’

I’m expecting Win to say, ‘Course we can!’ but for a moment he just stands there thinking.

‘I wasn’t joking when I said Crowky had

changed,’ he says. ‘He was always mean, but now he’s vicious, and with his army he’s powerful too. It feels like he’s everywhere.’ Win’s eyes flick back to the forest. ‘He used to have a few scarecrows working for him – things that got stuffed and stayed stuffed, a couple of unicorns, a mermaid – but now he’s made his army I’m always waiting, wondering what he’s going to do next. He’s taking over Roar.’ He looks at me and grins. ‘But now you’re back, Arthur, and I know you can sort Crowky out, just like you used to!’

Win isn’t making me feel any better. In fact, I feel sick with worry. ‘We need Rose. She always came up with our plans to get Crowky, and she was never scared of him.’ *Unlike me.*

‘Well, Rose isn’t here, but we have got you.’ He pulls my arm. ‘Come on. I want to show you something.’

We go along a path that skirts the edge of the forest. All the time Win keeps glancing into the trees, pausing every few steps to listen. Soon we come to a cave and Win lights a candle. He passes it to me and whispers, ‘Go on. See what’s

inside.’

Holding the flickering candle up high, I walk deeper into the cave, then I stop and look around.

At first I don’t understand what I’m seeing. The cave is full of objects arranged on rocky shelves. I step closer. A butterfly hair clip sits next to an empty Hula Hoops packet. A scrap of paper with a game of hangman drawn on it is arranged on a ledge next to a single welly with a hat propped on top. A Batman key ring (missing one leg) dangles from a nail, and at the back of the cave I find a carefully folded T-shirt and a metal pot of green putty.

The putty is set on its own ledge with an upturned plastic cup acting as a stand. ‘After the Relic of Arthur, *that’s* my favourite thing,’ whispers Win. ‘You left it behind four years ago, just after your birthday.’

And that’s when I realise that this cave is a museum full of things that once belonged to me and Rose. I turn in a circle and the candle lights up curling stickers and animal rubbers, a lone Haribo, a book without a cover and a whole

collection of sweet wrappers threaded on a piece of string. ‘Where did all this come from?’

‘All over Roar,’ says Win proudly. ‘I found most of it, but the unicorns brought things too. And look!’ He points to the wall and I lift the candle higher. Hoof prints cover the soft, sandy walls, hundreds of them, overlapping each other. Above the hoof prints, someone – Win, I’m guessing – has carved ‘ROSE AND ARTHUR, MASTERS OF ROAR’.

‘I made this when you didn’t come back. To begin with it was just for me, and to keep your things safe, but when things got bad the unicorns started to visit, and then the furries. It made us feel better . . . safer.’

I pick up a Pokémon trading card. ‘Why did you want to show me this, Win?’

‘You need to know that you’re a Master of Roar, Arthur, just like Rose, and if anyone can defeat Crowky, it’s you.’

I swallow, and put the Pokémon card back on its shelf. ‘You reckon?’

‘Absolutely. Now let’s go and sit by the fire,

make some toast and come up with a super-stealthy plan to get your grandad back!’

Chapter 16



Questions

1. What does 'I gasp, my heart pounding' suggest how the character is feeling at the beginning of chapter 16? **(2 marks)**
2. What does Win suggest he might do while the stallion tramples through the coals in the fire? **(1 mark)**
3. What does the word 'imply' mean? **(1 mark)**
4. Find and copy 2 descriptions of how the pain felt. **(2 marks)**
5. Why does Arthur carry a flickering candle? **(1 mark)**

